

Assemblyman Dario Frommer

43rd Assembly District, including the areas of Glendale, Burbank and Los Angeles.

2003 Legislative Accomplishments

November 2003

2003 was an extremely difficult year for the California Legislature, as we faced closing an unprecedented \$38-billion budget deficit and a distracting recall campaign against Governor Gray Davis. Despite such obstacles, all 10 of the bills I sent to the Governor were signed into law by the end of the year. These pieces of legislation include a landmark bill to expand health care to working Californians, a bill to offer continuity of care for patients whose doctor has a contractual dispute with their HMO and a legislative package to enhance the accountability and transparency of hospital billing systems in the state. In addition, the Governor signed legislation to crack down on large corporations using illegal tax shelters, keep guns out of the hands of juvenile firearm offenders and prohibit elected officials from asking film producers for charitable donations in return for film permits.

Assemblyman Leads Fight to Curb Rising Health Care Costs

Health insurance premiums for individual and group coverage rose 40% between 1997 and 2002.

Health care premiums have risen by double digits in each of the last four years.

Projections estimate average health care cost per employee increased by 53% in Los Angeles, 55% in Orange County, 65% in Sacramento, 60% in San Diego and 66% in San Francisco between 1998 and 2003.

CHAIRMAN FROMMER INTRODUCES HOSPITAL CHARGEMASTER BILL PACKAGE

Prompted by an investigative hearing held by the Assembly Health Committee to address allegations of price gouging by hospitals, such as Tenet Healthcare Corp., Frommer introduced AB 1627 and AB 1628, which were both signed into law. Assembly Bill 1627 requires that hospitals make public their chargemaster, or list of "sticker prices" for medical services. Such transparency puts a stop to hospitals that game the system and gouge patients with high prices. Assembly Bill 1628 prevents hospitals from billing patients rather than HMOs for post-stabilization care in the emergency room.

Frommer Leads Fight to Curb Rising Health Care Costs in California

Assemblyman Dario Frommer (D-Glendale) and Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn (D-Saratoga) pushed through AB 1528, a companion bill to SB 2. Assembly Bill 1528 addresses the crisis of rising health care costs in California.

The bill creates a blue ribbon commission that will research and recommend strategies for promoting high quality health care while containing health care costs. The commission will include business, labor, consumers, hospital and physician representatives, as well as health economists and other experts.

The commission must present a report to the Governor and Legislature by January 1, 2005.

FROMMER CO-CHAIRS CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON LANDMARK LEGISLATION TO EXPAND HEALTH CARE

SB 2 by state Senator John Burton (D-San Francisco) and Assemblyman Dario Frommer will expand health care to 1.5 million California workers. The bill requires businesses with 200 or more workers to provide health care for employees and their dependents beginning in 2006. Businesses with 50 or more employees are required to provide health insurance for just their workers beginning in 2007. Those employers who do not provide health care directly will pay a fee into a state pool that will be used to provide health care for those employees, under the bill. At Frommer's request, businesses with 20 or less employees are exempt from the bill.

QUICK FACTS: SB 2

- 20% of California's population is uninsured.
- Uncompensated care costs California's businesses and taxpayers \$6 billion each year.
- SB 2 will cover about 1,563,000 uninsured workers and dependents.
- SB 2 affects only 5% of California businesses.

THREE-YEAR BATTLE OVER CONTINUITY OF CARE ENDED

A new law authored by Assemblyman Dario Frommer (D-Glendale) will prevent hundreds of thousands of Californians from being forced to change doctors because of a contractual dispute between their physician and HMO. The Governor signed AB 1286 in September, ending

Frommer's
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"It is outrageous that a pregnant woman or a cancer patient is suddenly forced to change doctors because their HMO terminates a contract with their doctor."

-Assemblyman Dario Frommer

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Sutter Health doctors for several weeks as the parties failed to reach agreement before the contract elapsed. Under AB 1286, pregnant mothers and patients with chronic illnesses are among patients who will be able to remain with their physician until their treatment is completed.

LEGISLATION SIGNED TO KEEP GUNS FROM JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Assemblyman Frommer introduced AB 319 to keep juvenile firearm offenders from buying or holding guns until they turn 30. Frommer was prompted to introduce the measure after a recent incident in Los Angeles, when an adult gang member legally in possession of a gun was shot by a rival gang member and taken to the hospital. Though the injured gang member had previously been convicted of possessing a firearm as a juvenile and indicated that he was hoping to retaliate against a rival gang, the police had no choice but to return his weapon to him when he was released from the hospital.

Firearm Statistics

In 2002, the LAPD and LACSD arrested 290 juveniles for carrying, buying or concealing a firearm.

In 2001, a total of 1,225 Los Angeles County residents were killed, with 866 of those residents killed by someone using a firearm.

Statewide, offenders between ages 18 and 29 account for 39.5% of arrests in the 2,201 firearm homicides in 2001.

LEGISLATION TO CRACK DOWN ON ILLEGAL TAX SHELTERS

The Governor signed legislation by Assemblyman Frommer to crack down on large corporations using illegal tax shelters to rob the state of \$250 million to \$500 million each year. The bill, AB 1601, increases penalties imposed on corporations who use these types of illegal tactics as well as the tax shelter promoters who help them do it. In addition, this bill increases the statute of limitations on investigating offenders from 4 to 8 years. Frommer's legislation provides the California Franchise Tax Board with the tools it needs to effectively investigate and prosecute scofflaws who skirt the tax code.

URBAN PARKS FUNDING BECOMES AVAILABLE

State funding secured by Assenblyman Frommer in 2001 for creating new parks became available this year for local communities planning to bid for the program Frommer was able to earmark \$15 million of an \$832-million state park bond for densely urban areas like Burbank and Glendale that are sorely in need of open space and recreation areas.

" While California is adding 600,000 residents every year, there are few resources available for local governments and non-profits to create new park space. "

Assenblyman Frommer